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Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	F/F
Fandom:	Overwatch (Video Game)
Relationship:	Fareeha "Pharah" Amari/Angela "Mercy" Ziegler
Character:	Fareeha "Pharah" Amari , Angela "Mercy" Ziegler
Additional Tags:	a lot of other characters are mentioned but angela and fareeha are the main ones , fareeha has nice legs , and fareeha is very smooth , angela is very charmed by her , rocket angel , they flirt a lot
Series:	Part 1 of moments in time
Stats:	Published: 2016-06-01 Words: 2833

it's late and sleep eludes us

by [caesurae](#)

Summary

“And here stands Doctor Ziegler, ogling me from the kitchen doorway in the early hours of the morning.” Fareeha’s tone is quiet and teasing.

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Or,

Fareeha is kind and charming, and is also very attractive, and Angela is falling for her.

Notes

GUESS WHO SHOULD BE STUDYING but fell in love with Pharah/Mercy and had to write a fic about them? That's right. It's me.

This was originally meant to be 500 words or so. And look where we are now, folks. I'm sorry for any grammatical errors or typos.

Expect me to write more about these two in the future. And other pairings, of course. I don't even play the game and I'm already in love with the characters.

It is hard for the agents of Overwatch to find time to relax. When they are not fighting, then they are back at base healing and recovering from conflict. If they are not recovering from missions, then they are training and planning and researching.

Still. Downtime is something of a necessity. *Everyone* needs time to relax, and the bonds of camaraderie need to be maintained. So they make do, when they can – group breakfasts that usually end in food fights (thanks to Hana, Lena, and Lucio); team sports in the gym (the gym, where Zarya and Fareeha reign supreme, and dodgeball has a very *painful* meaning); and nights spent in the common room, drinking beer and swapping tales.

Tonight is one of those nights. They have gathered in the common room, and there is a large amount of food and beer, and music is playing quietly, mingling pleasantly with the sound of several conversation. Angela is sitting on a couch in the corner of the room, deep in a cheerful discussion with Torbjorn and Winston.

“We shall meet in my forge tomorrow afternoon,” Torbjorn declares, “and I will show you my latest creation.”

“Going to tell us what it is?” asks Winston, glancing at Angela.

“No. It is a *secret*.”

Angela laughs. “Usually your *secrets* result in someone being blasted across the room, Torbjorn.”

“Yes,” he agrees, “and *that* is the thrill of discovery, Angela.” He pushes himself off the couch that he and Angela share, and salutes them with his empty beer bottle. “I’m off in search of more beer.”

“Farewell,” Winston says gravely. And off Torbjorn goes, not even making it to the bar before Reinhardt quite literally pulls him into a conversation with Jack.

“I hope,” Angela says, “that tomorrow afternoon, nothing explodes in my face.”

“I’ll bet, after last time.” Winston shakes his head and laughs. “I’ve never seen someone suture their own face before with such calm precision.”

There’s a shout from across the room. Lena, with a bottle of vodka in one hand, stands atop the pool table, a spark of challenge in her eyes.

“I’ll go see what she wants,” Winston volunteers. Then he ambles across the room, raising a burly arm when Lena cheers at his approach. Angela watches them all, has a mouthful of her beer, and smiles.

It’s good, seeing everyone relax. Even Jack is easing into conversation, with Reinhardt’s heavy arm about his shoulders. *Nights like this do not come often enough, so we must enjoy them, when we can.* Satya and Mei are laughing by the bar, and Genji sits with them, moving his hands in elaborate motions as he speaks.

“You know,” comes a familiar voice, “I never really saw you as a beer drinker.” It’s Fareeha, beer in hand, stepping closer till she can sit down next to Angela. The couch is small enough that their bodies end up touching – Angela’s knee pressed against Fareeha’s thigh, their shoulders brushing together.

Maybe the room is just warm. Maybe that's why Angela suddenly feels *heated*, warmth rushing through her limbs and making her skin tingle.

Really, though, it's Fareeha. Fareeha: tall and strapping, almost always composed, with her steady dark eyes and charming smile. She's dressed casually tonight, like most of them are. Her jeans are worn and snug, and her faded t-shirt is tight across her broad shoulders. She's undeniably attractive. Angela's unable to deny her attraction to Fareeha. And thus the warmth rushing through Angela's body.

Angela swipes a thumb across the surface of her beer bottle, leaving a trail in the condensation gathered on the glass. The bottle is cold in her hands, a startling contrast to the heat she now feels coursing through her body. "Oh?" she asks, giving the other woman a sidelong glance, her lips curving into a smile. "What sort of alcohol did you see me drinking, then?"

It's a little telling that Fareeha does not need time to ponder her answer. Evidently she has thought about this before. "Wine," she replies without pause. "A fine, dry red. Or whiskey – proper whiskey, aged in oak barrels." She stops abruptly, almost as though there was more she wished to say, but has forced herself to stop instead.

And she knows me so well, Angela thinks. It's quite charming, really. But that's Fareeha – she's always been rather charming, since the first day they met, when Fareeha had shook Angela's hand and made a quip about guarding the skies together.

"I am partial to whiskey," the doctor admits. "Quite partial."

Fareeha smirks. "I will remember that." Her dark eyes are gleaming. "How are you enjoying the night, Angela?"

Angela leans further back into the plush material of the couch – and ends up pressing herself closer to Fareeha. Not that she minds. Fareeha does not seem to mind either, as she does not move away. If anything, she relaxes against Angela.

"It is nice to relax," muses Angela. "Nice to see the others relax."

Across the room, McCree is sprawled across an armchair, recounting an adventure from his time spent as a gunslinger. Zarya and Hana are members of his audience, Zarya lying on the floor, Hana curled up in another armchair. The two of them are clearly amused, and McCree seems to be enjoying talking to them.

"I agree. Something we all need." Fareeha swallows a mouthful of beer, then rests the bottle against one leg. "It is nice to let our hair down – metaphorically and literally." Her eyes are intent on Angela's. "You look good with your hair down, Angela."

Angela wonders if she's flirting. She has been wondering this a lot, lately. Sometimes Fareeha's comments seem to hold a stronger meaning. When they encounter each other in the gym, Fareeha *smiles* and says what a *fine form* Angela has.

Is it flirting, then?

"Thank you," Angela says, feeling somewhat flushed. "You – you look very good too, you know."

"I do?"

"Yes – of course you do. You are a very attractive woman."

“Ah. This is good to know, then.” Fareeha smiles at Angela, and it’s a breathtaking sort of smile. “Very good, indeed.”

Definitely flirting, then, Angela decides.

She and Fareeha spend most of the night at each other’s side, sitting on that couch with their knees pressed together. Occasionally they are joined by some of the others – Torbjorn brings them more beer; Zarya and Hana come over with questions about aerial fighting; Lena hands out vodka shots. The party ends with just the two of them left, though. The others drift off to bed in pairs and small groups – Mei chatting cheerfully with a flushed Zarya, Torbjorn and Reinhardt reminiscing as they stumble out into the corridor, McCree shepherding Lena and Hana out while asking them to keep their spirited discussion down to a reasonable level. Winston and Genji, both wearing *party hats*, of all things – when they appeared, Angela has no idea.

Jack is the last to leave. “Sleep well.”

“You too, sir,” they chorus.

Jack tilts his head to the side, considers them both for a moment, then nods. He turns on his heel, and leaves the common room.

And then they are alone. The clock on the wall says it is 12:11am, and as soon as Angela registers the time, she feels herself yawning.

“Tired?” Fareeha asks.

“Mm.”

Fareeha stands. How she makes such a movement look so *graceful*, Angela does not know. “May I walk you to your room?”

And there it is – that *charm*. “You may,” Angela replies, smiling. Fareeha offers a hand, and Angela lets the other woman pull her to her feet.

They walk closely together on their way to Angela’s room, hands brushing every so often. It is a comforting thing, the contact between them, and part of Angela wants to reach out and twine her fingers through Fareeha’s, to see how well their hands would fit together.

She does not reach out for Fareeha’s hand, though, and contents herself with the occasional brush of hand against hand. It seems like no time has passed at all before they have reached the door to Angela’s room.

“Well,” Angela says, “this is me.”

“So it is.” Fareeha leans one shoulder against the doorway, smiling down at Angela. “I had a nice time, tonight.”

It had been nice, spending most of the night with Fareeha. Even when the two of them had been talking to others, the warmth of Fareeha’s body next to hers had been pleasant, reassuring. And the *flirting*...well, that had been rather nice too, to be honest.

And reassuring, in a way. To be honest, Fareeha has often been on Angela’s mind of late, and she had started to wonder if it *was* attraction, and whether it was one-sided or not.

Apparently, given Fareeha's flirting, it is not.

"As did I," says Angela honestly. "Goodnight, Fareeha."

"Goodnight, Angela."

"Sleep well." Suddenly emboldened, Angela stands on her tiptoes and leans forward, pressing a kiss to Fareeha's cheek. "Thank you for tonight."

And with that, she slips into her room and closes the door behind her, and then bites her lip and smiles.

Despite four beers and two shots of vodka making her limbs languid and weariness weigh heavily, sleep does not come to Angela easily.

Sleep, in fact, does not come at all. She tosses and turns, she attempts to meditate, she counts sheep and counts down from a thousand by sevens.

And sleep eludes her still.

She thinks about war and she thinks about research, and then she thinks about what has happened in the past and the future holds, and she thinks about Fareeha Amari with her charming smile and steady dark eyes. Angela tries not to think at *all*, but her brain seems insistent on entertaining a dozen thoughts at once, and so sleep does not come.

Finally, at 1:31am, Angela gets out of bed and puts on an old pair of sweatpants and a blue jumper, and leaves her room. Her sock-clad feet are near silent on the cold concrete floor as she makes her way to the base's kitchen. From the hallway, she can see that the lights within are on, and can hear the sounds of someone opening cupboards and retrieving utensils.

I wonder who else is awake? Angela steps into the kitchen doorway and comes to a stop, eyes falling upon a familiar figure standing by the stove.

It is Fareeha, wearing a white singlet and dark shorts, hair falling gracefully to brush her broad shoulders. Angela's eyes travel down, following the lines of Fareeha's well-muscled legs, from defined thighs to glorious calves; lingering on old scars and the lines of definition that mark where muscles end. She wonders if Fareeha's skin is as soft as it looks.

"And here stands Doctor Ziegler, ogling me from the kitchen doorway in the early hours of the morning." Fareeha's tone is quiet and teasing. She has become aware of Angela's attention, evidently.

Angela starts, tearing her eyes away from Fareeha's calves and up to her face. "Ah, Fareeha – I was – I was staring, yes, and my apologies for that, I..." Angela shakes her head and clears her throat, her cheeks flaming. "It is late. Early. I hope that I am not disturbing you?" *Fool*, she thinks, and curses her traitorous mind and eyes. *Staring at her legs like that! She must have felt your gaze burning into her skin.*

Fareeha gives her a tired smile. "I think I might be glad for the company."

"Oh – well then." Angela clears her throat again, and takes a few steps into the kitchen. "I *am* sorry. About the, ah, ogling."

"It is nothing to worry about, Angela. It was not unwelcome. Besides," and now Fareeha's eyes

are twinkling, a little, "I have found myself appreciating your...legs, on occasion."

Angela stares, and manages to say, "Oh."

And back to the flirting, apparently.

Not that it is ever unwelcome. Not with Fareeha. It is...very welcome.

"Yes." Fareeha's cheeks have darkened, just a little, but the twinkle remains in her eyes. "Just so you know, Angela."

Well, Angela thinks, her lips curving. *Well, then*. Reassured, she takes another three steps forward, and leans her hip against the edge of the long dining table. "So," she begins. "I take it you cannot sleep?"

"No." Fareeha shrugs, the movement graceful. "You cannot sleep either, I guess. Let me make you a drink?"

"You would?"

"I am making one for myself anyway. It is no trouble." A pause, then Fareeha adds, "It would be my pleasure."

Despite her tiredness, Angela's lips twitch. "In that case, then yes please."

"Alright. It should not be long." Fareeha turns back to the stove, but then glances over her shoulder at Angela. "Will you stare at me while you wait?"

Angela drops into a nearby chair and leans her forearms against the table, laughing quietly. "No."

"*No*? Is there something wrong with my legs, now? Or are you suddenly too embarrassed?"

"The latter, I think. There is nothing wrong with your legs. They are truly wonderful."

"Why thank you, Angela. You say the sweetest things."

"As do you." Fareeha laughs, at that.

Their banter continues on in this fashion, till Fareeha finishes at the stove, pours the heated drink into two mugs, and brings them both over to the table. She places one mug before Angela, and raises the other to her lips.

It is hot chocolate, and it is delightfully warm, and the smell alone is heavenly. Angela, who is certainly no stranger to good hot chocolate, has a sip and sighs in pleasure.

"This is wonderful, Fareeha. Thank you."

"It is my pleasure." Fareeha watches Angela from over the rim of her mug. The silence between them is comfortable, and they sit and drink quietly, legs brushing together beneath the table.

The hot chocolate, as warm and delicious as it is, brings a heavy blanket of weariness. *Perhaps this is why Fareeha made it*. Angela finds herself biting back a yawn, and glances over to see that Fareeha's eyes have begun to drift shut. She stands quietly and takes their empty mugs over to the sink, then returns to the table.

"Come," Angela says softly. "I will walk you back to your room."

She offers Fareeha her hand, just as Fareeha did in the common room a few hours ago. Fareeha gives a slightly lopsided smile and allows Angela to pull her up from the chair. And then, together, they leave the kitchen.

“Do you think you will sleep better, now?” Angela asks as they make their way towards the living quarters.

“Mm.” Fareeha’s hand brushes against Angela’s hip. “The hot chocolate helps.” She punctuates this with a yawn. “See?”

“I think I will sleep well enough, now,” Angela agrees.

Fareeha laughs quietly. “Will you dream of my legs?”

Angela nudges her gently in the side with an elbow. “Hush.”

“If you don’t, Doctor Ziegler, I shall be most disappointed.” Fareeha nudges her back, just as gentle, and Angela catches her arm and holds it, relishing in the warmth of Fareeha’s skin.

They have reached Fareeha’s room, and so they come to a stop before the door. Angela releases Fareeha’s arm and considers her thoughtfully.

“Do you dream of me?” Angela asks curiously.

Fareeha’s eyes are gentle and steady as she says, “Yes.”

“I dream of you,” Angela admits. “And I think of you a lot. It was...confusing, I think, until tonight. Tonight made things more apparent.”

“It did?”

“Yes,” Angela says, and stands on her tiptoes to kiss Fareeha, this time on the lips. It is a gentle thing, this kiss – hesitant and soft, Angela sighing happily against Fareeha’s lips, and Fareeha responding in kind, and when their lips part, Fareeha wraps her arms about Angela and holds her close.

They stand like that for a long time, just the two of them in the corridor outside of Fareeha’s room, Angela’s face pressed into Fareeha’s neck and shoulder, and Fareeha’s chin resting atop Angela’s head.

“I am glad, then,” Fareeha says. “To be honest, I did not know if I was courageous enough to tell you.”

“And I was not courageous enough to ask you what it all meant.” Angela laughs tiredly, then, and adds, “But courageous enough to kiss you twice.”

“That is very true,” Fareeha whispers, and presses a kiss to the crown of Angela’s head. “I am glad that you did.”

“As am I.”

And so they part. “Goodnight, Angela,” Fareeha says, and reaches out to brush a thumb over Angela’s cheek.

Angela’s skin tingles where Fareeha’s thumb has touched, but they are both weary and it is early in the morning, and they both need their sleep.

So she replies with, “Goodnight, Fareeha. I will see you in the morning.” And she turns, a little regretfully, and lets her feet carry her in the direction of her bed.

Fareeha watches her go.

Angela wonders if Fareeha knows how much she is smiling.

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